

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application with the listing of claims as follows:

Please cancel claims 1-67 without prejudice or disclaimer, and amend claim 68 as follows:

1-67. (Canceled)

68. (Currently Amended) A travel product sale offering processor-implemented method for offering a travel product for sale, comprising:

receiving via a communications network from at least one customer an electronic travel inquiry related to a transportation ticket, the travel inquiry including at least

a preferred origin,

a preferred destination,

a preferred class,

a preferred travel date, and

a preferred travel time,

and the transportation ticket comprising at least one of an airline ticket, a train ticket, and a cruise ticket;

querying from a tolerance database an acceptable travel date range and an acceptable travel time range;

retrieving from a travel records database a plurality of alternative transportation ticket records based on the travel inquiry, wherein retrieving the plurality of alternative transportation ticket records further comprises:

comparing by the processor an alternate origin associated with each of the plurality of alternative transportation ticket records to the preferred origin,

comparing by the processor an alternate destination associated with each of the plurality of alternative transportation ticket records to the preferred destination,

comparing by the processor an alternate travel date associated with each of the plurality of alternative transportation ticket records to the preferred travel date,

comparing by the processor an alternate travel time associated with each of the plurality of alternative transportation ticket records to the preferred travel time, and

retrieving by the processor only those alternative transportation ticket records having alternate origins matching the preferred origin, having alternate destinations matching the preferred destination, having alternate travel dates within the acceptable travel date range around the preferred travel date, and having alternate travel times within the acceptable travel time range around the preferred travel time;

determining by the processor a preferred itinerary margin for the travel inquiry and an alternate itinerary margin for each of the plurality of alternative transportation ticket records;

determining by the processor a preferred itinerary load factor discrepancy for the travel inquiry and an alternate itinerary load factor discrepancy for each of the plurality of alternative transportation ticket records, wherein determining an itinerary load factor discrepancy further comprises:

querying an optimal load factor associated with a given itinerary,
querying a current load factor associated with the given itinerary,
querying historical sales data associated with the given itinerary,
computing by the processor a projected load factor based on the current load factor and the historical sales data, and

computing by the processor the itinerary load factor discrepancy as the difference between the optimal load factor and the projected load factor;

determining by the processor a value differential associated with the travel inquiry and each of the plurality of alternative travel ticket records based on a combination of at least two of the preferred itinerary margin, the alternate itinerary margin, the preferred itinerary load factor discrepancy, and the alternate itinerary load factor discrepancy;

selecting at least one alternative travel ticket record from the plurality of alternative travel ticket records having a largest value differential;

determining a date difference between the preferred travel date and an alternate travel date associated with the at least one alternative travel ticket record;

determining a time difference between the preferred travel time and an alternate travel time associated with the at least one alternative travel ticket record;

determining a class difference between the preferred class and an alternate class associated with the at least one alternative travel ticket record;

querying from a benefit rating database a benefit rating weighting schedule;

computing by the processor a weighted benefit rating based on the weighting schedule, the date difference, the time difference, and the class difference;

querying a benefits database based on the weighted benefit rating;

retrieving at least one benefit for association with the at least one alternative travel ticket record based on the querying of the benefits database, wherein the benefit includes a conditional expiration feature that causes the benefit to expire within a predetermined time period unless the customer accepts the alternative travel ticket record within the predetermined time period; and

providing via the communications network the at least one benefit and the at least one alternative travel ticket record for review by the customer.